SUDOKU ALPHA

QUICK **A5296**

	2	7	4	9		5		
		4	8			1		9
	5	9			6		8	
	1							
					7			
			6	4		3	5	
	9		7	6	8			
		8		1	3		6	4
				5				

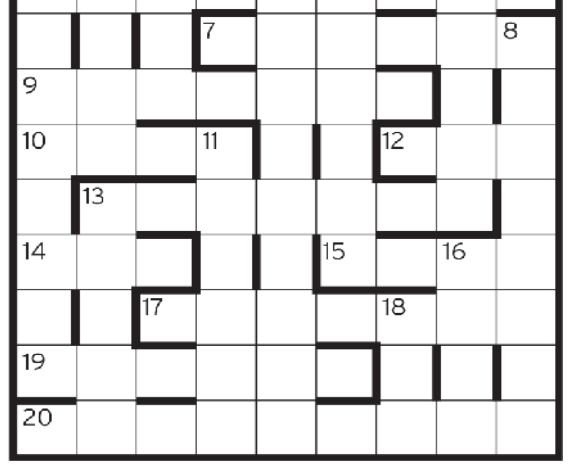
TRICKY **B5296**

		4		5			1	
				4			9	
3	2							8
								2
			6		7			
9	6				1		7	
7		8				3		
6	5		9					
				7	8	9	2	

To solve this puzzle each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9. While the rules may be simple, there are numerous strategies to help you solve sudoku. For hints and information visit www.sudoku.org.uk.

Created by Peter Ritmeester (C) PZZL.com

CROSSWORD



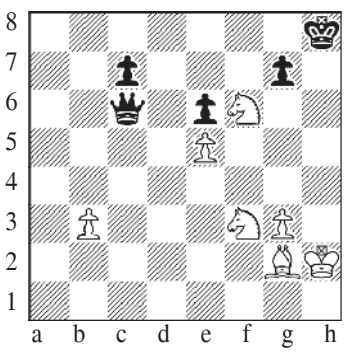
ACROSS

1 Sleuth (9)
7 Very sad (6)
9 Cold-blooded creature (7)
10 Door handle (4)
12 Type of paint (3)
13 Coached (7)
14 Consume food (3)
15 Small city (4)
17 Made a mistake (7)
19 Mental tension (6)
20 Term beeps (anag.) (9)

DOWN

1 Total absence of light (8)
2 Biblical garden (4)
3 Gratuity (3)
4 Denigrate (9)
5 Flair (6)
6 Very bright (5)
8 Tube (8)
11 Style of dance (6)
13 Sense (5)
16 Used to be (4)
18 Drinking venue (3)

CHESS



WHITE TO PLAY

HINT: WIN THE QUEEN..

Solution:
1. Ng5! (threatens Nf7 mate! as well as Bxc6).

TARGET

HOW many words of four letters or more can you make from the letters shown here?
In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each must contain the centre letter and there must be at least one nine-letter word.
No plurals or verb forms ending in "s".

TODAY'S TARGET

Good 12;

Very good 18;

Excellent 24 (or more).

Solution tomorrow.

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS

ERUDITELY

dilute duel duet duly duty elude elute eluted erudite ERUDITELY etude lieu lure lured lurid lute rude rudely rued rule ruled rutile true trued truly turd tuyere ureide yurt

THE METRO FUNNIES

BIG NATE | BY LINCOLN PEIRCE

DEE DEE! YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT FASHION!
WHY, YES, I DO!
WELL, MARCUS SAYS MY SHIRT MAKES ME LOOK LIKE A 3-YEAR-OLD.
PFFT!
MARCUS IS A WANNABE JOCK WHO DRESSES LIKE WHATEVER HE SEES ON TIKTOK!
GOOD THING YOU DON'T CARE WHAT HE THINKS.
Visit bignate.com

THE WIZARD OF ID | BY BRANT PARKER AND JOHNNY HART

WHAT DID YOU LEARN?
SOME NERD IN MINECRAFT WILL BUILD A WAY BETTER VERSION OF YOUR CASTLE
FORTUNE-TELLER SEE THE FUTURE!
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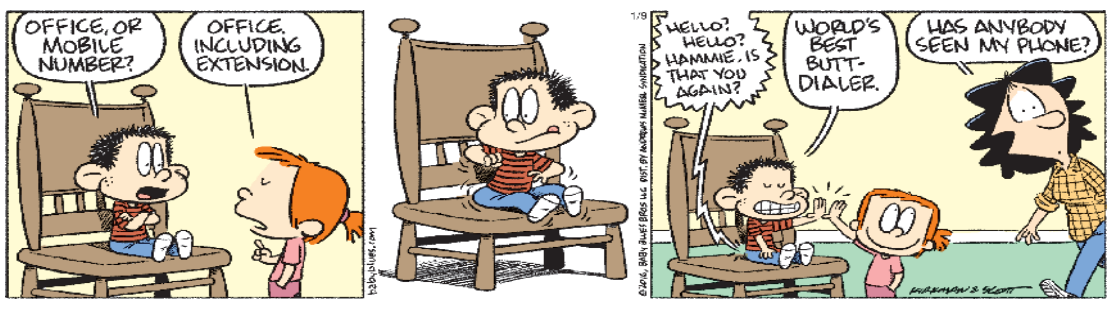
BABY BLUES


OFFICE, OR MOBILE NUMBER?
OFFICE, INCLUDING EXTENSION.
HELLO? HELLO? HAMMIE, IS THAT YOU AGAIN?
WORLD'S BEST BUTT-DIALER.
HAS ANYBODY SEEN MY PHONE?

WEATHER

Sunset & Sunrise

	Hyderabad	Islamabad	Karachi	Lahore	Peshawar	Quetta
Sunset	05:54pm	05:19pm	06:00pm	05:18pm	05:24pm	05:54pm
Sunrise	07:13am	07:10am	07:17am	07:01am	07:17am	07:25am

Three Day Forecast

	Today				Tomorrow				Day After		
	Min	Max	Outlook	Humidity%	Min	Max	Outlook		Min	Max	Outlook
Faisalabad	4	14	Partly Cloudy	85	3	14	Partly Cloudy		4	14	Mostly Sunny
Hyderabad	7	22	Sunny	47	7	22	Sunny		7	23	Mostly Sunny
Islamabad	5	16	Sunny	57	5	16	Sunny		7	17	Partly Cloudy
Lahore	4	13	Fog	82	4	14	Fog		5	13	Partly Cloudy
Multan	3	15	Sunny	86	4	15	Partly Cloudy		5	16	Partly Cloudy
Peshawar	2	15	Sunny	48	3	17	Sunny		5	17	Cloudy
Quetta	-2	10	Sunny	49	0	11	Sunny		1	14	Cloudy

Temperature estimates are internationally sourced and may differ from local estimates.

HELP

EMERGENCIES

Police Help	15, 99212652-53, 99212634
CPLC	1102, 35662222
Fire Brigade	16, 99215007, 99215008.
Bomb Disposal	99212674
KE Complaints	118
Telephone complaints	1218
Railway Inquiry	99213565-66
PCAA Flight Inquiry	99071284, 99071259
	99071265, 114

HOSPITALS

Abbasi Shaheed	99260400-09
Civil Hospital	99215740, 9215960
Jinnah Hospital	99201300-99201301
NICVD	99201271-6
Aga Khan Hospital	34930051
Medicare Hospital	021-111-001-786
Kharadar Gen Hospital	32510113-16
Indus Hospital	35112709
Tabba	36811841, 111844844
Ziauddin Hospital	35862937-9, 36648237-9
Kiran Cancer Hospital	99261601-04
Liaquat National	111-456-456, 34939615
Memon Medical	34691147 — 54
A.O. Clinic	36685564, 3668550-64
Baqai Hospital	36618396, 36618398
Holy Family Hospital	32258994, 32258991
Patel Hospital	111174174
South City Hospital	35374072
Kidney Centre Institute	35661000-10
Karwan-e-Hayat	021-111534111
Usman Memorial	021-36310311-15

AMBULANCE

Edhi	115, 32310066, 32310077
Chhipa	1020
SIEHS/Rescue	1122
St.John	32250500, 32250600
Red Crescent	35306227, 35306228

BLOOD BANK

Fatmid	32225284, 32258656
Husaini	32238405-08
PWA (Civil)	99215740, 99215959

WORD GAME

By Kathleen Saxe

▼ TODAY'S WORD
INSPECT

(INSPECT: in-SPEKT: To view closely or officially.)

Average mark 28 words
Time limit 45 minutes

Can you find 38 or more words in INSPECT?

The list will be published tomorrow.

SOLUTIONS

▼ YESTERDAY'S WORD – REJOICED

redo	cire	dice
reed	code	dicer
rejoice	coder	dire
rice	coed	doer
ride	cord	
rode	core	
eider	credo	
erode	creed	
jeer	cried	
iced	decor	
cede	deer	
cero	deice	
cider	deicer	

RULES OF THE GAME:

1. Words must be of four or more letters.
2. Words that acquire four letters by the addition of "s," such as "bats" or "dies," are not allowed.
3. Additional words made by adding a "d" or an "s" may not be used. For example, if "bake" is used, "baked" or "bakes" are not allowed, but "bake" and "baking" are admissible.
4. Proper nouns, slang words, or vulgar or sexually explicit words are not allowed.

YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

ACROSS

1 Sapphire
8 Revere
9 Hilt
10 Nil
11 Eclair
13 Right away
15 Payoff
17 Cos
18 Dual
19 Antler
20 Woodchip.

DOWN

1 Spherical
2 Alicia
3 Pull
4 Hesitated
5 Ivor
6 Renew
7 Belly flop
12 Safari
14 Gusto
15 Polo
16 Ouch.

METRO EVENTS

PLAY

The Mother, a play, is staged at the National Academy of Performing Arts, at 8pm.

FESTIVAL

'Karachi Eat Festival 2026' is organised at Bagh Ibn-i-Qasim, near the Clifton Beach, at 3:30pm.

WORKSHOP

A workshop on 'The Art & Science of Case Pedagogy' is organised at Salim Habib University, at 4pm.

EXHIBITIONS

A group show of works by six artists is underway at Artscene Galleries. Titled *It Didn't Go Away,* the show will continue till Jan 12.

The Enterprise, a solo exhibition by Aamir Habib, is underway at Canvas Gallery. It will continue till Jan 15, from 11am to 7pm.

COMEDY

'Stand-Up Comedy+Karaoke' at Rosati Bistro, DHA, at 9pm.

HOROSCOPE

By Georgia Nicols

ARIES | March 21-April 19

**** Today you're restless to do something that's ambitious or noteworthy. You would love to impress bosses, parents and people in authority with your ideas and abilities. It's an excellent day to start new ventures because you have the energy to be bold and daring! Tonight: Cooperate.

TAURUS | April 20-May 20

**** Sometimes we have heroic Walter Mitty daydreams about exploring exciting adventures. Today this is actually possible for you. Plans and ideas that you might have felt were beyond your reach might today be actually doable. The reason for this is you're determined and confident! Tonight: Get organized.

GEMINI | May 21-June 20

*** Disputes about shared property, inheritances, taxes and insurance issues might arise today. If they do, they'll be intense and in-your-face. If you feel accused or dismissed, you will defend yourself, and eloquently so. "Don't mess with the kid." Tonight: Socialize!

CANCER | June 21-July 22

*** You might encounter someone today who inspires you with their energy. They might arouse your ambition, stimulate your confidence and make you want to do something. Conversely, you might be upset with someone because you don't agree with them. Tonight: Relax.

LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

**** You'll be productive today because the Sun is lined up with Mars in the part of your chart that makes you want to get things done! This productivity will be exemplified at work, in your job or in any task that you choose for yourself today. (The secret is you identify with what you're doing.) Tonight: Interesting discussion.

VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

**** You have an amazing burst of energy today that you can use for creative expression and anything to do with the performing arts, writing, music, you name it. Others might be surprised at your sudden enthusiasm to initiate something new. Tonight: Take care of what you own.

LIBRA | Sept. 23-Oct. 22

*** You are affected by your immediate environment, and you want your home to look attractive. Sometimes it's messy and out of control, but you wish it looked nice. Today you have the energy to move furniture and accomplish what you want at home. Just do it. (You'll love yourself for it later.) Tonight: You're strong!

SCORPIO | Oct. 23-Nov. 21

**** Your communication skills are amazing today, which is good news for those of you in sales, marketing, teaching, acting or writing. You have energy, resolve and a determined focus, which will help you to be persuasive. Travel will please you. Tonight: Enjoy solitude.

SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

*** This is a tricky day because in one way, you're willing to bust your buns to boost your income, especially if it's a new idea or you want to initiate a new project. However, you are just as likely to blow your money big-time because you're enthusiastic about something. Tonight: Be friendly.

CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

***** Today the Sun is lined up with fiery Mars in your sign, making you feel vigorous! Because of this high level of energy, you need to be physically active. Don't sit at home getting dusty. Get out and do something. Start a new project. Tonight: You're admired.

AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

*** You might feel restless today because you have lots of energy building up within you, and you might not be sure where or how to channel it. One thing to keep in mind is that this year you can improve your existing job or get a better one. Likewise, you can improve your health. Ideas? Tonight: Learn something new.

PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

**** Today you might express a burst of energy in a creative way in the arts or the entertainment world or the hospitality industry. You're excited about an idea. It's something that you identify with, perhaps a pet project. Finally, today you have the motivation to act! Tonight: Check your finances.

The stars show the kind of day you'll have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-so-so; 1-Difficult

CONTRACT BRIDGE

Bidding Quiz

By Steve Becker

Bidding quiz

Your left-hand opponent deals and bids Three Clubs, both sides vulnerable, and your partner doubles. After your right-hand opponent passes, what would you bid with each of the following four hands?

1. ♠ Q962 ♥ J962 ♦ 753 ♣ 43
2. ♠ KQ96 ♥ KQ96 ♦ J53 ♣ 42
3. ♠ Q853 ♥ 72 ♦ KJ984 ♣ 65
4. ♠ K109642 ♥ 10 ♦ KQ65 ♣ 73

* * *

1. Three hearts. Partner's double is for takeout, so you cannot pass merely because you have a poor hand. The only real problem is whether to bid three hearts or three spades.

Three hearts is better even though your spades are slightly stronger. Bidding three hearts increases your chances of finding the best trump suit because it leaves partner room to bid three spades if he is so inclined, while three spades does not allow partner to bid hearts on the three-level. Occasionally that might result in losing a superior heart fit.

2. Four clubs. You have a game-going hand opposite a partner who almost surely has at least 14 points. But rather than guess whether the best game (or slam) contract lies in hearts or spades, you force partner to choose the trump suit by cuebidding the enemy suit. The four-club bid does not guarantee first-round control of clubs, but is better used in these circumstances to show game-going values with uncertainty as to which suit should be trump.

3. Three spades. The primary purpose of a pre-emptive bid is to make it difficult for the opponents to find their best contract. That is the case here, where you must choose whether to bid three diamonds or three spades.

Either bid could turn out right or wrong, so all you can do is try to judge which is more likely to prove successful in the long run. Most experts would probably bid three spades, contending that their partner is more apt to consider whether to carry on to game in spades (10 tricks) than in diamonds (11 tricks).

4. Four spades. Here you should bid what you think you can make. It would be dead wrong to bid only three spades, which is what you'd do with a hand containing much less -- possibly even no values whatsoever. Your hand is certainly much better than that.

Furthermore, jumping to four spades might stir partner into bidding a slam if he has extra values. With something like ♠ AQxx ♥ Axxx ♦ AJxx ♣ x, he would certainly act over a four-spade bid, but might even consider passing a three-spade response.

Tomorrow: How to capture a king.

YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

Quick — A5295

3	2	6	4	1	9	8	7	5
8	1	5	6	2	7	4	9	3
9	7	4	8	5	3	6	1	2
2	8	1	9	4	6	5	3	7
4	9	3	7	8	5	1	2	6
6	5	7	2	3	1	9	4	8
1	4	8	3	6	2	7	5	9
7	6	2	5	9	4	3	8	1
5	3	9	1	7	8	2	6	4

Tricky — B5295

7	5	2	3	9	1	6	8	4
4	1	8	2	6	5	3	9	7
9	6	3	8	4	7	5	2	1
1	7	9	4	3	8	2	6	5
2	3	6	5	7	9	1	4	8
8	4	5	1	2	6	9	7	3
3	8	7	9	1	2	4	5	6
6	9	1	7	5	4	8	3	2
5	2	4	6	8	3	7	1	9